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[ORIGINAL.]

A BOLD GUESS ON GEOLOGY,

BY A BACK-WOODS-MAN.

(Continued from our last vol. page 373.)

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—If I have not before this time committed to black and white my "Guess on Geology," it is not because I have thought it *too wild* to meet the public eye; for, though perhaps startling at first sight, it will not, on examination, be found one whit more wild than the tamest of those which have preceded it. Wildness, indeed, on this subject ought not to be regarded as objectionable, for, as the operation of "*world-making*" must have been a wild one, the theory which professes to explain it must be wild too, or it will not be worth a groat. By "world-making," however, I do not mean the *original formation* of the world out of nothing: of the operations of mind upon matter we know nothing, either from experience or analogy, and, therefore, we have no grounds for supposing that the *creation* of the world was attended with the slightest violence. But with this question the geologist has nothing to do; he leaves it, or he ought to leave it, to metaphysicians and theologians, and he limits his inquiries to those changes which have taken place in our globe since its first formation, and since the establishment of the laws of nature. From what he can see of the *nature* and the *magnitude* of these changes, he tries to discover the *kind* and the *intensity* of the forces which have produced them; and, most certainly, the traces which they have left are such as to justify the wildest speculations which geologists have yet indulged in. One alone seems to me to have gone beyond its mark; namely, that mentioned in my first letter, which, though so *seemingly quiet*, does, in reality, out-Herod Herod in wildness, by ascribing the deluge to a "temporary suspension of the laws of nature!" But here again we touch on metaphysical ground, for, as naturalists, we have no more to do with what takes place during a suspension of nature's laws than with the history of times prior to the establishment of those laws.

It is not, then, the charge of wildness which I have feared to meet, but, situated as I have been, I could not ascertain how far my "Guess" was a *new one*, owing to the "privation" of books above complained of. I have not been able to satisfy myself that no one had guessed the same thing before. I have found it difficult to believe that an hypothesis, which seems to me to spring so obviously from a view of the phenomena, should not have offered itself to the mind of some one or other of the "many ingenious men, who, from the days of Sanchoniathon down to the present time, have been so much given to the amusement of world making!" Yet I have looked for it in vain through such geological writings as have come within my reach, and as I could find no traces of it in the general views of the subject taken by the *Edinburgh*, in its review of Buckland, and by the *North American*, in its review of Ira Hill, (for both which we have to thank your little "Mirror,") I began to conclude that my Guess, though an old one with myself and my neighbours, might be a new one to your readers, and if so I cannot doubt that you will think it worth the printing.

Your late selections convince me that you are not one of those who deride theories and theoretical reasonings, and cry out for the everlasting accumulation of facts. In my opinion, even a bad geological theory, like a bad system of botany, is better than none at all; for if not true, it may be an approximation to the truth; and if not even this, it will serve as an incitement and a guide to the accurate observation of facts. Without some clue, or some idea of regular arrangement, all is endless variety and confusion:—with such clue, almost every fact assumes a sort of importance, in as much as it either confirms or contradicts a system. The fashion of the day is, however, against theoretical speculations, and those who indulge in them are sometimes spoken of sarcastically as "cabinet naturalists!" Even the *Edinburgh Review* speaks slightingly of those geologists who have *read much*, but *seen little!* and yet I would wager that this Reviewer himself has learnt much more from books, and cabinets, and geological maps, than ever he did from climbing mountains. I do not mean to doubt that he has visited the Pentland Hills, or that he has gone in person to investigate the wonders of Salisbury Craig, or that, with his "knapping hammer" in his hand, he has crossed the Forth to seek pebbles in the ploughed fields of Fifeshire. He may even have paced the Giant's Causeway, and studied the magnificence of Nature in the interior of Fingal's Cave; but still I fancy that he has not acquired as much of his geological knowledge from his own personal observation and research, as from the writings and accumulated labours of others. I may err in this supposition, but for my own part I would rather have an opportunity of perusing Mr. Greenough's essays, and of studying Mr. Greenough's geological map, (which, alas for Back-woods-men! we have never seen, and never shall see,) than of visiting Staffa, and scrambling all over the Hebrides. I do not mean to argue that Grub-street is the best possible locality for a student of geology; but if a man be necessarily confined to a cloud-capp'd garret in a smoky city, he needs not give up the study of geology on that account: he may be as capable of drawing scientific conclusions from facts, as the *operatives* who labour for the discovery and accumulation of those facts; and perhaps more capable; for all men are not alike;—some can wield a pen better than they can a "knapping hammer;" whilst others, as Robie Burns informs them, excel more in the use of the heavier of these philosophical instruments. *Non omnia possumus omnes.* Those who consume much of the midnight oil are, generally, not the best adapted for climbing precipices, running up the steep sides of mountains, and carrying ballast; nor are those whose bone and muscle and breath fit them for collecting geological specimens, generally the most wakeful during the burning of the midnight oil. We can surely admire and understand the sound conclusive reasoning of Mr. Gaussuse, respecting the manifest change of position of certain strata in the Alps, without climbing those mountains to examine the phenomena in person. There is certainly one geological phenomenon, and, perhaps, the most important one of all, which may be studied as advantageously by book and candle as on the top of a mountain; I mean the division of our globe into continents and oceans; the separation of the land from the water; the "gathering together of the waters, so as to let the dry land appear."

This *main feature* in the present structure of the earth has never yet been philosophically accounted for. All admit that the greatest part of our present continents have been under water; not transiently; not simply submerged for a short time, as might be supposed, if we regarded only the phenomena of Kirkdale Cave, but for a long period of years.

What physical power, then, has been able to remove this water, or to raise the land above its surface? This, it appears to me, is the question, of all others, which it behoves a geologist first to answer; and, if it be once well and satisfactorily answered, I apprehend that the solution of all minor geological questions will follow, as a matter of course.

It was my intention, in this letter, to try to give a new turn of thinking on this subject; but other unexpected avocations have prevented me. I almost hesitate to forward this to you, on account of the hasty and slovenly manner in which it is written: but it will serve to make my next letter shorter; and I do not like to let slip the good opportunity I have of sending it to you.

P. S. I have just got a sight of the work of Mr. Greenough, which I have been anxiously wishing for a long time past; and I find that he has not pre-occupied my ground, though he borders hard upon it: he seems, to me, to stop short, by withholding his opinion exactly where it was most interesting that he should have proceeded. I recommend it to you to extract, for the benefit of your readers, and to add (as a part of the postcript of my letter) the last part of his second essay, beginning page 189,—"Thus have we." I shall write my next letter on the supposition that this has been done.

June, 1826.

Literature, Criticism, &c.

MEMOIRS OF M. OUVRARD.

Monsieur Ouvrard, the great French speculator (on whose affairs judgment is just now pronounced) has made an appeal to the world at large, by publishing his memoirs. The book will be a curious one to mercantile and financial people, both from the imposing view in which it places commerce as a science, and as connected with political arrangements, and from the complete key which it furnishes to the state of French finance for the last 30 years: but our limits will only allow us to notice here and there a few of the details, which will be principally those connected with the personal history, and later speculations, of the author.

M. Ouvrard was born, he informs us, in the year 1770, on the borders of Bretagne and Poitou; his father, Oliver Ouvrard, was an extensive proprietor of paper-mills; and his first attempt in the way of trade was made upon the breaking out of the French revolution, when, seeing that the new liberty of the press, joined to the contentious

temper of the times, was likely to multiply books and pamphlets ten times beyond their former amount, he purchased, at a hazard, the whole product of a number of paper-manufactories for the succeeding two years, and realized (as he had expected) a very considerable profit by the rise of the commodity. This was a dashing speculation for a man not more than twenty years of age, and gave token perhaps that the adventurer should be, as he certainly became, great in the way of loans and premiums hereafter.

As the tumult of the revolution gave an impulse to all active spirits, M. Ouvrard, for a short period, quits the desk and becomes a soldier; and, about this time, at the parties given by Madame Tallien (still a *particular friend* of our contractor) he describes his meeting with a number of persons, then in private stations, who have since played considerable parts in the theatre of the world. Among these was Barras, (then, however, already high in power, 1791 and 1792) Hoche, of whom an odd anecdote is told, of a jesting prediction by Bonaparte, that he would die in his bed; Madame Beauharnois, who was soon afterwards married to Bonaparte; and last, the future Emperor himself, then only an officer of artillery. Of all the visitors in this circle, he says, Bonaparte was among the least attended to; and an incident is related which would show his pecuniary circumstances to have been very far indeed from easy. A certain decree of the "Committee of Public Safety" allowed "cloth sufficient to make a uniform" to every officer in "active service." Bonaparte, among others, applied for his share of this distribution, but was refused by the issuing commissary, upon the ground that his brigade was not actually in the advance. On this he went to Madame Tallien, who gave him a letter of recommendation to the authorities concerned; and, thus armed, the man who was to sway the destinies of Europe made a second application, and actually obtained cloth to make himself the *habit, et culotte d'uniforme.* M. Ouvrard supposes that some slight jealousies which existed between Bonaparte and himself were in some measure the cause of many of the persecutions which he complains of hereafter. A very little while, however, must have put an end to these jealousies, by putting an end to the equality in rank of the parties. Barras saw already sufficient of Bonaparte's powers to intrust him with the military arrangements of the 13th day of the Vendemaire, which commenced the reign of the "Directory;" he then went away at once to command the army of Italy, and to lay the foundation of his after extraordinary fortune.

Some successful private enterprises having given M. Ouvrard the command of considerable funds, he begins to lend money to the Directoral Government; prior to this period, the "Memoirs" contain some brief, but curious, anecdotes of leading characters of the day. There is a whimsical notice of his desiring to interest Robespierre in favour of some persons at Nantes, who were in a way to be guillotined; and applying for this purpose to the daughters of an upholsterer, in whose house the disposer of heads resided. These ladies, who are understood to have some influence with their lodger, procure M. Ouvrard an audience; when Robespierre receives him, seated between them at breakfast; gives him coffee very politely; but declares that he "can do nothing," and advises him to go to Fouquier Tainville. Before visiting this last personage, M. Ouvrard calls, for information, on the wife of his "secretary," and this lady tells him plainly that no intercession but that of a handsome woman will have any weight with Monsieur Tainville. Not being a handsome woman, M. Ouvrard is something at a loss; but a young lady, whose father is dying in prison of fever, resolves to undertake the mediation: a somewhat ridiculous flirtation (according to the author's account) follows on the part of M. Fouquier; but he behaves, however, with reasonable candour, and without any violence being suffered by the lady's feelings, her father is released.

In the meantime, while the war goes on in Egypt, the affairs of the republic thrive but meagrely; and the several branches of administration agree ill among themselves. The "Council of Five Hundred," meditating a measure on one occasion contrary to the views of Barras, the latter became enraged. He turned to General Guidal, who commanded at the Military Academy, and who happened to be near him at the moment, and asked, "General, can you rely upon your troops for a measure against the Five Hundred?" "Give me *carte blanche*," was M. Guidal's reply; "I will buy five hundred sacks, into each sack I will put a deputy, and throw them all into the Seine." The Council of Five Hundred, hearing something perhaps of this project, abandoned its intention.

The power of Barras, however, himself, to put people in sacks, or do any thing else to the purpose, was shortly to be at an end. The return of Bonaparte from Egypt gave the *coup de grâce* to the "Directory." On the 18th Brumaire, at nine o'clock in the morning, Moreau entered the court of the Luxembourg, at the head of half a brigade. "At that moment," says M. Ouvrard, "I happened to be alone with Barras. The aspect of his dwelling already announced a change of fortune. His antechamber was deserted. When the servants announced to him that breakfast was ready, there were thirty covers laid as usual, but no guests. *I sat down alone with him.* In a few minutes the Admiral Bruce, and M. Talleyrand, came in to demand his resignation on the part of Bonaparte." He gives up his throne; and the man of the army becomes First Consul.

A few days after, the First Consul applies to M. Ouvrard for a loan (to the State) of 12,000,000 of francs. This M. Ouvrard refuses, and desires payment of 10,000,000, which he had already lent the Directors. He is then mulcted of part of what he considers his due upon this loan; and arrested for alleged misconduct in respect to his contracts for the service of the Marine; and "thus began," he says, "those persecutions, which, after twenty years, are not yet over."

In this year (1800), M. Ouvrard's wealth already seems to be immense. His property, valued in the course of the legal proceedings against him, amounts to 29,000,000 of francs. And, at his seat at Raincy, he keeps open house—present or absent; with a splendid mansion, admirable cookery and wines, packs of hounds, stables of horses, a park full of deer, &c. &c.; receiving people of the very first rank and consideration (that is, when he is not in prison), both foreigners and French. Lord Erskine, Mr. Fox, the Royal Family of Spain, the King and Queen of Etruria, Berthier, the Prince of Peace; these are only a few of the names of his visitors.

The dispute of the marine contracts, however (even while still going on), does not prevent M. Ouvrard from being engaged in new transactions with the Government. He is always complaining, and being complained of; never satisfies any body, and is never satisfied himself; but still keeps getting offers for fresh contracts, and accepts them. In the year 1800, he takes the contract to provision the army for the Austrian campaign of Marengo. In 1802 (one of the years of the scarcity) he contracts for the importation of a large quantity of corn. In 1803, he takes the marine contracts again (the old ones being still unsettled) for a fresh term of six years. In the next year, he contracts for a very considerable loan; and, presently afterwards, in despite of all differences, he is sent to Madrid by Bonaparte, to negotiate the payment of the Spanish subsidy of 62,000,000 of francs to France.

Getting money from the treasury of Spain was a hard task to set an ambassador about; and the first reply of the Spanish minister to the suggestion deserves to be quoted, as a formula in the way of getting rid of such applications. "*Monsieur, nous avons la meilleure volonté, mais pas un ecu!*" M. Ouvrard, however, whose commercial views are perfectly colossal, immediately begins to project; partly, he admits, for his private advantage; but also, he says, for the advantage of France; because, to go no farther, if he could make Spain rich, then Spain might pay her debt. Accordingly, he undertakes an immense importation of wheat in a time of dearth; projects loans, canals, and works of various other important descriptions; the only wonder of the reader being, that he does not, at once, propose to *purchase Spain* altogether. And at length, in fact, he does make a contract which very nearly approaches to this, and which he himself calls an *acte sans exemple*; for, besides proposing to furnish *all* the sources of the country, naval and military, for a term of years, he absolutely makes a bargain, upon a "sharing scheme," with Charles IV., for the *whole trade* of the Spanish colonies in South America; liberty and monopoly, import and export! his most Catholic Majesty and the contractor (the latter immediately coming down with a loan) being to divide the future profits of this gigantic transaction between them.

Bonaparte, with a very few words, in the shape of an imperial decree, puts an end, much to M. Ouvrard's annoyance, to "the greatest commercial and political enterprise which had ever been conceived or attempted." But even a projector might have done good who could have excited the minds of the people of Spain; and our author seems to have had a bold and extended view of the causes which depressed the country. He was well received by the Prince of Peace, and breakfasted with his Highness and the Queen; who, even in the presence of visitors, seemed "to take a sort of pleasure in showing her affection" for her favourite. His description of Spain, to—an old monarchy, which had remained fixed, while all the other governments of Europe were advancing—a country in which the visitor seemed to go back 200 years in laws, manners, fashions and taste, as he crossed the frontier, with the comments, that it was "a representation of the 17th century"—"history alive and in action," &c. a great deal of this is eloquent, and strongly illustrative.

Bonaparte, who is now Emperor, seems to have had a very slight faith in the honesty of contractors; an error which very often gives disturbance to M. Ouvrard. "Accustomed, in his earlier days," M. Ouvrard observes, "to be acquainted with the worst part of society, he always would say, as soon as any man had taken a contract, 'Now, how much will he plunder out of it?'" The Emperor, indeed, seems to have carried this suspicion so far, as to think the Oriental measure of "squeezing a contractor out" every now and then, no impolitic proceeding; and, certainly, the result rather approves his principle: for M. Ouvrard, through all his complaints of being "squeezed," will still persist to go on dealing.

In 1809 a decree against him, on the matter of the Spanish transactions, carries him to the prison of St. Pelagie; and he remains dividing his time between gaols and great undertakings, pretty nearly up to the year 1812; but still holding immense wealth, and treated with great kindness and consideration. While he is at liberty only *sous cautionnement*, for instance, he gets a passport and liberty to go, for his private affairs, to Amsterdam. Afterwards he is permitted to go out of actual prison to visit his mother, who is dangerously ill. In the beginning of the year 1812, there being some difficulty as to the supplies of provisions in Paris, the Baron Pasquier, then Prefect of Police, comes to him *in gaol!* to take his opinion on the subject; and immediately afterwards, from the same place, he addresses a memorial to the Emperor on the subject of furnishing subsistence for the army in the projected campaign in Russia, offering, upon certain conditions, himself to undertake the service.

It is easy often for a man to speak to advantage who relates what were his own opinions upon any question after the result is decided; but M. Ouvrard publishes his actual memorial to Napoleon as he transmitted it; and his views upon the subject of army supplies generally, are such as do unquestionable credit to his sagacity. He saw clearly that the system of "making the war maintain the war," at least in the manner in which Napoleon and his leaders acted upon that system, in the long run could not succeed. To lay the countries waste through which armies marched, and to destroy the means every where of the people, was only to make it quite certain that, in those countries, the armies would very soon be starved, and could not continue. His letter recommends, in considerable detail, pretty nearly the course that follows:—First, the supplying the army as much as possible *from France*, on its way through Prussia and Russian Poland; secondly, the *purchasing* every thing which it might be necessary to take up in those countries (instead of stealing it) and so, with the aid of the inhabitants, organizing a scheme for continued supply; and thirdly, the entire abandonment of the system of "requisition;" which, as the author observes, is filled with uncertainty, as well as danger, in the present; and never fails to destroy all hope, and even all power, of supply in future.

Some interesting particulars of interviews between the author and Bonaparte are given in this part of the book; and, in October, 1813, M. Ouvrard, being still in the St. Pelagie, is offered his liberty, by the Duke of Rovigo, on condition that he shall construct a new plan of finance. This condition, however, he rejects; and the events of 1814 putting an end to the power of Napoleon, he then proposes a scheme of general finance (and is well attended to) to the Bourbon Government.

In fact, it is curious to observe how completely M. Ouvrard's history demonstrates the truth, that money, or he who can suggest the means of coming at money, is always welcome. Bonaparte deals with him even while he prosecutes him for an alleged fraud. When Bonaparte abdicates, the Bourbons listen to him. Bonaparte returns from Elba; and the first thought is of M. Ouvrard, who at once agrees to produce 50,000,000 of francs against a given quantity of new *rentes*; a bargain which the royal Government, however, afterwards resists being bound by. The result of the battle of Waterloo brings back the Bourbons again; but it only brings to M. Ouvrard another change of customers.

All this time, however, there is the greatest possible tact in all his operations; a nice perception as to what only seems rash and hazardous, and as to what really is likely to be a failing speculation. After the battle of Waterloo (Bonaparte and M. Ouvrard have been getting upon better terms, rather, than during the hundred days) the Emperor *then* makes our capitalist a pecuniary proposal? Intending to quit France, he desires to borrow a large sum, in South American securities, for which he will engage his "private demesnes, and those of his family." But M. Ouvrard backs out, instinctively: he feels that the *titles* to these properties may have a chance to be disputed by

the new Government: nay, so difficult is it for a falling man to find any body who will deal with him, he even declines taking charge (for the Emperor) of a "great number of chests," upon the plea that "he could not take them without an inventory of their contents," which there is not time to draw up. Bonaparte accordingly departs for England; and M. Ouvrard comes with his five millions of new *rentes*, taken during the hundred days, to be "squeezed" by M. Louis, the royalist minister.

Several notices of M. Ouvrard's subsequent operations, connected with the invasion of Spain, have already been published; but the account, in his own words (whether just or delusive) is given with so much vivacity, that we shall pass over the intermediate part of his history, in order to extract a part of it. At the end of 1815, he proposes to create a new stock (his invariable remedy for all want of money) in order to enable France at once to get rid of her obligations to the Allies. This scheme, for the time, falls to the ground; but, in the beginning of 1817, new *rentes* are actually created, of which he becomes the chief negociator, as well as a purchaser to a large amount. The ready sale of this scrip, as soon as it comes out, affords a great triumph to M. Ouvrard; many of those persons who most loudly declared that it would never sell at all, being among the most anxious to get slices of it. Besides these transactions, he negotiates with the Duke of Wellington for the victualling of the English Army of Occupation; but the French authorities interfere and prevent the bargain. He then makes the loan to the Regency of Urgel; getting the payment of all sums due to him on former transactions from Spain in ready money out of his advance, as a first condition. And then, either because it was necessary for him to watch over his multiplicity of interests in Spain already, or that he smelt out the contract which actually followed, on the 3d of April, as the French troops should be ready to pass the Spanish frontier, M. Ouvrard finds himself at Bayonne.

At this moment, according to M. Ouvrard's statement, all was in confusion. The army was on the bank of the Bidassoa, and likely to remain there, for to advance was impossible. Three months (this is the general cry) cannot collect that which ought to be upon the spot already. There are no rations; no forage; no magazines; no means of transport. There is some wheat in store, perhaps enough for ten days; but there are no mills nor sieves to make it into flour; nor ovens, nor bakers, to bake it into bread. The cavalry is even in a worse condition; there is forage only to last for five days. In the artillery, there are neither horses nor drivers; and the little supply that exists is all impracticably and irregularly placed. Now this seems to be very opportunely cut out for M. Ouvrard to show his talent; and, accordingly, on the very day after his arrival at Bayonne, the Duke d'Angouleme sends for him, and offers the entire contract for all the services of the advancing army; he accepts it, relying (as he says) entirely upon the force of *money* to raise supplies even in an enemy's country; and the detail of the measures which he took to that effect shall be given as nearly as possible in his own words.

On the first signature of this contract, orders are given for the army to pass the Bidassoa; but M. Ouvrard's supplies are not to commence until four days after. "On the first day, the troops lived as they could—which was not without some trouble; and the arrangements of the Government agents gave but an unsatisfactory idea of their talents: uneasiness began already to show itself in the army. On the second day, no one disguised his suspicions. General Terlet found it almost impossible to procure forage for the few artillery horses that he had; the soldiers spoke openly in their bivouacs of the ill appearance of affairs; and the old troops, who had served in the Peninsula before, said plainly—'Thus Spain always has been our destruction, and always will be! Here, we are but a day in the enemy's country, and already there are no provisions.'

"By this time we were at Tolosa—on the next day my contract and supply was to commence. The Military Council assembled: I was sent for, and interrogated. 'Where are your magazines—what are your resources?'—'To-morrow the army will receive its regular issues.'—'We must have ten days' provisions at once for the second corps.'—'To-morrow the second corps shall receive ten days' provisions.'—'Well, but we want more than these mere promises. Your magazines—your depots,—where are they?' I refused to answer, because I knew that my views would not have been credited. The Council adjourned; met again; adjourned again; and again met.

"I had called together (this is in Tolosa) all the authorities; the priests, the merchants, all the persons of every description who had any credit, any influence. 'Gentlemen,' I said, 'the army is here: it does not desire to live at your expense; but you will feel that it must be fed: assist me in procuring provisions for the troops to-day, that they may not take your own out of your mouths to-morrow. We want bread, meat, vegetables, forage, horses, carriages. You know your country and its resources; away with you, therefore, into the neighbourhood, and inform your relations, your friends, every body you see, of this. Every thing that is brought I will pay for in ready money. I will do more; for every thing that is brought to me before eight o'clock to-morrow morning, I will pay ten times its value; nine times the worth for all that comes before nine o'clock; eight times for all that comes before ten; and so following. Now, here is money in advance for all! Away, and lose no time about the business.'

"You may always rely, that men will be true to their own interest. By sun-rise next morning, the tops of the hills where covered by people of all sexes and ages, each hurrying before the other, to get the reward of the highest price. An event took place which I had not prepared for. The soldiers, uneasy about their supply, fell upon this crowd before it reached my stores; and pillaged it in an instant. Every thing was gone! The peasants came running to me. 'Monsieur, I had arrived before eight o'clock; they have plundered me of my goods!'—'How much were they worth?'—'So much.'—'Here is the money; go away, and bring more: when you come again you shall not be plundered.' In short, the army had its full supply. It cost me dear, this system, in the first instance; but that we paid for every thing, and paid well, was soon known. Commodities then came in from all quarters; and when the supply became abundant, the prices fell accordingly."

Now, this was at least the same policy which M. Ouvrard had always recommended; and it seems pretty clear, the commander of an army and a prince of the blood does not take an important measure without some reasonable cause—that, without his contract, the expedition could not have gone on. His whole operations, however, are disputed; they were probably sufficiently advantageous to himself; and he is charged with having bribed a great number of persons to neglect their duty, in order to leave the Government at his mercy;—if this be the fact, for that "neglect of duty," those persons in the first instance should be made responsible. The Duke of Belluno, whose arrangements are a good deal impeached by M. Ouvrard's description of the state of affairs at Bayonne, has published a memorial in his justification; and great curiosity is excited as to the result of the inquiry. One point, however, seems to be clear—the Duke of Belluno complains in his memorial of being attacked by a "private speculator, whose only talent was that he contrived to get the magazines and resources of the state surrendered to him unconditionally."

In the meantime, the probability perhaps is, that M. Ouvrard did on this occasion that which he appears to have done in a great many others, take advantage of an emergency (perhaps in some degree created by himself) to make a very profitable, in fact an unbearably profitable contract. But, as regards the calling this his "only talent," that would seem to be rather a mistake; for there can be no question that he is a man of very uncommon enterprise and ability. For the matter of the "honesty" it is a difficult point to deal with. Bonaparte, we see, considered the "honesty" of contractors to be altogether a chimera; but M. Ouvrard seems, most incontestibly, to have been just as indispensible to all parties as he was unpleasing. Among all the various Governments which have ruled in France since the commencement of the Revolution, there has hardly been one which has not employed him, complained of him, sent him to prison, and concluded by employing him again. Upon the whole, his book is well written, and will be found to contain both information and amusement; and the short abstract, to which our limits have compelled us to confine ourselves, must be regarded rather as an index to, than as an account of its contents.

Chit Chat.

A Lesson for Monarchs.—During his march to conquer the world, Alexander, the Macedonian, came to a people in Africa, who dwelt in a remote and secluded corner, in peaceful huts, and knew neither war nor conqueror. They led him to the hut of their Chief, who received him hospitally, and placed before him golden dates, golden figs, and bread of gold. "Do you eat gold in this country?" said Alexander. "I take it for granted, (replied the Chief) that thou wert able to find eatables in thine own country. For what reason then art thou come amongst us?" "Your gold has not tempted me hither," said Alexander, "but I would become acquainted with your manners and customs." "So be it," rejoined the other; "sojourn among us as long as it pleaseth thee." At the close of this conversation two citizens entered, as into their court of justice. The plaintiff said, "I bought of this man a piece of land, and as I was making a deep drain through it, I found a treasure. This is not mine, for I only bargained for the land, and not for any treasure that might be concealed beneath it, and yet the former owner of the land will not receive it." The defendant answered, "I hope I have a conscience, as well as my fellow-citizen. I sold him the land with all its contingent as well as existing advantages, and consequently the treasure inclusively." The Chief, who was also their supreme Judge, recapitulated their words, in order that the parties might see whether or not he understood them aright. Then, after some reflection, he said, "Thou hast a son, friend, I believe?"—"Yes." "And thou (addressing the other) a daughter?"—"Yes." "Well, then, let thy son marry thy daughter, and bestow the treasure on the young couple, for a marriage portion." Alexander seemed surprised and perplexed. "Think you my sentence unjust?" the Chief asked him. "O no!" replied Alexander; "but it astonishes me." "And how, then," rejoined the Chief, "would the case have been decided in your country?" "To confess the truth," said Alexander, "we should have taken both parties into custody, and have seized the treasure for the King's use." "For the King's use!" exclaimed the Chief. "Does the sun shine on that country?" "O yes." "Does it rain there?" "Assuredly." "Wonderful! But are there tame animals in the country, that live on the grass and green herbs?"—"Very many, and of many kinds." "Ay, that must then be the cause," said the Chief; "for the sake of those innocent animals, the all-gracious Being continues to let the sun shine and the rain drop down on your own country, since its inhabitants are unworthy of such blessings."—*Hurwitz's Hebrew Tales.*

An Old Sportsman and his Hunter.—Squire Boghurst, of Frinsbury, in the county of Kent, was, in his youth, esteemed one of the best and boldest sportsmen that ever followed the deer, or came in for the brush of the crafty fox. His pack was generally admired for being as well disciplined as any hounds in the kingdom; but the Squire growing in years, and a little infirm, was forced to give way to the tyranny of time, and upon the death of Lady Boghurst he relinquished the charms of the chase, attaching himself, at the age of 80, to three things, the most pleasing to solace old age, his friend, his bottle, and his old hunter. Like a good old sportsman, whose spirits revive at the crack of the whip and the sound of the horn, the Squire was fond of recounting the joys of his youth, when the quickset hedge and the five-barred gate were no obstructions to his pursuits. To indulge in this pleasure he became president of a sporting club, at Mr. Heath's, the White Hart and Silver Oar Tavern, in the city of Rochester, where, once a week, he was never known to fail attending. There he found the circle that approximated to his fancy; and he was wont to stay with his friends till a very late hour. Sometimes the Squire had the sun to light him home to Frinsbury. At his time of starting, old Trusty was brought to the door of the tavern, and his master being placed by the waiters on the horse's back, old Trusty was left, unguided, to pursue his way. One morning, early, one of the arches of Rochester bridge gave way, and left a most frightful chasm, impassable to any thing that had not wings. To assist the foot passengers, a nine-inch deal had been placed over the gap, and at each extremity a guide, with a lantern, to warn the stage drivers of the danger, and all such as might approach. It was in the depth of winter, and the morning particularly dark, and a slip of the foot might plunge the unwary into a gulf little inferior to the deepest fall of the tide at London bridge. The news of this disaster did not reach the White Hart Tavern till after daylight, when the landlord and family were dreadfully perplexed for the fate of the Squire and poor Trusty, for they were possessed with a belief that the friendly pair must have been swallowed up in the vortex below. Paternoster, the waiter, was despatched with all speed to Frindabury to learn their fate. Upon his arrival at Boghurst House, the Squire was made acquainted with the arrival of the waiter. "Send him up," was the reply. When the messenger entered the Squire's chamber, having told his tale of the fall of the arch, and all the miserable apprehensions of Heath and his family for their old friend, the waiter imprudently blundered out, to give weight to his narration, that the Squire was far gone in liquor when they set him on his horse. "Well, Pater," said Boghurst, "give my respects to the good family, and tell them, though I was drunk, my old Trusty was sober, and, as you see, he delivered me at home in safety."—*Sporting Magazine.*

Poetry.

Every emanation from the genius of Robert Burns ought to be religiously preserved. The following has appeared in the *Literary Magnet* as one of his unpublished compositions. It has every mark of authenticity; and, we may add, that it is superior to most of his formally descriptive pieces, which are but mediocre—*e. g.* his Prayer of the Bruar to the Duke of Atholl; his lines upon the Fall of Foyers, &c.

LINN CLOUDEN ABBEY.

Ye holy walls that still sublime,
Resist the crumbling touch of time;
How strongly still your form displays,
The piety of ancient days!
As through your ruins, hoar and grey;
Ruins, yet beauteous in decay:
The silvery moon-beams trembling fly,
The form of ages long gone by
Crowd thick on fancy's wondering eye,
And wake the soul to musings high.

Even now, as lost in thought profound,
I view the solemn scene around,
And pensive gaze, with wistful eyes,
The past returns, the present flies;
Again the dome, in pristine pride,
Lifts high its roof and arches wide,
That knit with curious tracery,
Each Gothic ornament display.
The high-arched windows, painted fair,
Show many a saint and martyr there;
As on their slender forms I gaze,
Methinks they brighten to a blaze;
With noiseless step, and taper bright,
What are yon forms that meet my sight?
Slowly they move, while every eye
Is heaven-ward raised in ecstasy.
'Tis the fair, spotless, vestal train,
That seek in prayer the midnight fane;
And hark! what more than mortal sound
Of music breathes the pile around?
'Tis the soft chaunted choral song,
Whose tones the echoing aisles prolong;
Till thence returned they softly stray
O'er Clouden's wave with fond delay;
Now on the rising gale swell high,
And now in fainting murmurs die.
The boatmen on Nith's gentle stream
That glistens in the pale moon's beam,
Suspend their dashing oars to hear
The holy anthem, loud and clear;
Each worldly thought awhile forbear,
And mutter forth a half-formed prayer.

But as I gaze the vision fails,
Like frost-work touched by southern gales;
The altar sinks, the tapers fade,
And all the splendid scene's decayed.
In window fair the painted pane,
No longer glows with holy stain,
But through the broken glass, the gale
Blows chilly from the misty vale.

The bird of eve flits sullen by,
Her home these aisles and arches high;
The choral hymn, that erst so clear,
Broke softly sweet on Fancy's ear,
Is drowned amid the mournful scream,
That breaks the magic of my dream;
Roused by the sound, I start and see
The ruined sad reality!

THE LOVES OF THE SHELL-FISHES.

AMERICAN HUMOUR.

A crab there was, a dashing young blade,
And he was in love with a lobster maid;
But the lobster maid was a terrible prude,
And she told her mamma that the crab was rude.
Said her dear mamma "Pray what did he do?
Did he give you a kiss or a billet-doux?"
"Oh, no," says she, with a toss of her head,
"But he ogles me so,—'tis so shocking ill bred,
That I vow, if he still persist in his suit,
I'll box the ears of the impudent brute."
But an oyster dandy saw the maid,
"Oh, split me," said he "Miss, if I'm afraid."
So tighter he braced his corset shell,
And strutted away with a Broadway swell;
And he told the maid, as he twirl'd his seal,
He'd die at her feet, if a dandy could kneel.
"Oh, Sir," said she, "since that can't be,
You know you can hang yourself on a tree!"
And the oyster rav'd, "But no," said she,
"You never shall die of scorn from me."
So she gave him her ruby red hand to kiss,
And he felt like a fish in a sea of bliss;
But the crab, he cock'd his hat in their faces,
And challeng'd the oyster to fight at two paces.
The ground was marked, and they took their stand,
And a barnacle gave the word of command;
They took their aim, and the oyster fell;
But, alas! the worst of the tale is to tell;
For, while he lay weltering in his shell,
A giddy young muscle that passed that way,
And saw the end of the fatal affray,
Declared that the lobster's love was a sham,
For he'd just seen her married that night to a clam.

LYRA GERMANICA,

Being part of a series of original translations from the most eminent German poets, intended to convey to the English reader a correct idea of the spirit and manner of the original.

TO ONE REMOVED TO A DISTANCE.

[FROM GOETHE.]

And wilt thou never more appear?
Art thou for ever from me flown?
Still sounds in my accustom'd ear
Thine every word, thine every tone.

And as the early wanderer's glance
Pierces in vain the morning sky,
If soaring 'midst the blue expanse,
He hears the warbling lark on high.

My anxious look explores in vain
Each hill and vale, each field and grove;
My lays repeat the unvarying strain,—
Return, return, my gentle love!

LINES

On reading in last week's Kaleidoscope a request for a poetical translation of a French prose inscription designed for Shakspeare.

What French encomiast of the dead,
'Mid rotting fame, has raised his head?
Now condescends to deck a Briton,
And pens a pompous epithet on
One Shakspeare; puffs the bloated line,
That *we* may fix it to his shrine:
A man (he says) of genius bright,
Creative fancy, deep insight
Of human heart; the pride of—hold!
We know him well, though yet untold
In elegy his fame of old,
Save where a lonely modest line
With Shakspeare's name speaks all divine:
Nor dares a Briton sound the lyre,
Though well such theme his soul would fire;
But e'en as comets seek the sun
Are lost and dazzled as they run;
Such bright essay the lyre enthrals,
And with its glow the muse appals:
Her numbers vibrate, trembling, low,
Till from her lips those verses flow
The bard himself had penned below:
And need we ask our Gallic neighbours
To sound the strain she vainly labours?
Say, is *their* tongue so pithy, bold,
'Twill tell the theme *we* have not told?
First prove to me they understand
The bard they seek to praise or brand;
Unlike their countryman,* who, 'stead
Of (race)-course, course (of dishes) read.
Then let them prate, lampoon, or praise,
With fellow Frenchmen,—we will raise
Our hearfelt incense in one line—
One word—our *Shakspeare's* name's divine.

Let muse elegiac tune her lyre,
Where waning worth might else expire;
But Shakspeare's fame will ever stand,
Upheld by no presumptuous hand.
Let epitaphs proclaim and praise
The minor stars' diminished blaze;
As would the painter's art display
With pencil nice the varied ray,
Which beaming rainbows ever show,
But what bold hand e'er drew the sun's meridian glow?

Liverpool. E. S.

* Voltaire.

METEOROLOGICAL DIARY.

[*From the Liverpool Courier.*]

	Barometer at noon.		Extreme during Night.		Thermometer 8 morning		Extreme heat during Day.		State of the Wind at noon.	Remarks at noon.
Aug.										
9	29	83	62	0	67	0	69½	0	W.N.W.	Cloudy.
10	29	80	60½	0	65	0	69	0	W.N.W.	Fair.
11	29	70	61	0	64	0	68	0	N.W.	Fair.
12	29	91	61½	0	63	0	69	0	W.	Fair.
13	29	89	56	0	60½	0	70	0	N.W.	Fair.
14	29	78	58	0	61	0	66½	0	W.S.W.	Fair.
15	29	71	55½	0	60	0	69	0	S.S.W.	Cloudy.

11th,—Rain during night—14th, Heavy showers, 10, a. m. —15th, 3, p.m. stormy.

BUOYANCY OF CORK.—A large cork collar, weighing nearly four pounds, requires a weight of about fifteen pounds to sink it; and a cork jacket and collar, containing rather more than four pounds of cork, supports about sixteen pounds weight, exclusive of the canvas, the belt and buckle. Either of these will sustain the wearer in the water, with the upper part of the shoulders out, although he may wear heavy clothes at the same time.

The Beauties of Chess.

"*Ludimus effigiem belli.*"—VIDA.

ERRATA.—Last week, in endeavouring to rectify some supposed inaccuracies in our chess department, we "*got out of the frying pan into the fire*," and we are not a little disconcerted at the necessity we are now under of requesting the patience of our chess readers, while we offer some further explanation on the subject. When we first received the game CII. which we introduced in the *Kaleidoscope* of the 1st of August, we announced that the black was to move and the white to give checkmate, without stating the precise number of moves. We were soon favoured with a solution in twelve moves by *An Old Correspondent*, and this we inserted in the *Kaleidoscope* of Aug. 8. Soon after its insertion we received another solution in seven moves, which, as being the shorter cut, we inserted in the *Kaleidoscope* of last week, requesting our chess readers to erase with a pen the twelve-move solution of *An Old Correspondent* in the *Kaleidoscope* of August 6. In doing this we were premature, as that solution is the correct one, inasmuch as the moves are all forced; whereas the checkmate cannot be given in seven moves, if the party mated move in the proper manner to prolong the checkmate. This will be rendered apparent by investigating the play, and by perusing the following note on the subject. We have now to request that our chess readers will take the trouble to rectify these errata thus:—Aug. 1. Game CII. page 29, ought to have been announced thus:—"The black to move, and the white to give checkmate with the pawn in twelve moves."—In the last *Kaleidoscope*, Aug. 15, page 48, erase the solution in seven moves, and the prefatory paragraph, or else add a note at foot, intimating that the checkmate cannot be *forced* in seven moves, and referring to the following explanation.—*Edit. Kal.*

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—Ingenious and beautiful as the solution which *Iago* has given to No. CII. may be, it is incorrect, inasmuch as it cannot be forced by the white, unless the player of the black chooses to accommodate him. I make no pretensions to much skill in the game, but I will venture to assert, that if *Iago* will allow me to conduct the black, and will promise to make the first four moves as set down in the solution in question, he shall not give checkmate *with the pawn* in twice seven moves; and I have yet

to learn that it can be *forced* in less than twelve moves, as I before stated. O. C.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—I fear you will consider me presumptuous, in daring to call in question the method in which *Iago* has solved the problem proposed by himself. He appears to make his solution depend on the black claiming *a queen.* Now, this is, in my humble opinion, the worst piece the black could claim, considering the existing situation; as it leads directly into the very snare which the white has prepared. The very act of the white castle following the black pawn so closely, implies a design, which piece would have been thwarted, by moving other pieces, rather than the queen.—You, Sir, have frequently shown us, that the sacrifice of the queen will win the game; but *Iago* here endeavours to illustrate, that the gaining of a queen may lose the game. For this, as well as for the admirable concealment of his plan, *Iago's* solution is exceedingly beautiful; but the former one in twelve moves seems to come nearer the intention of the problem, which is to *force* the black to receive a checkmate from the pawn.

Yours, &c. W. C.

Solution to Game CIV. by An Old Correspondent.

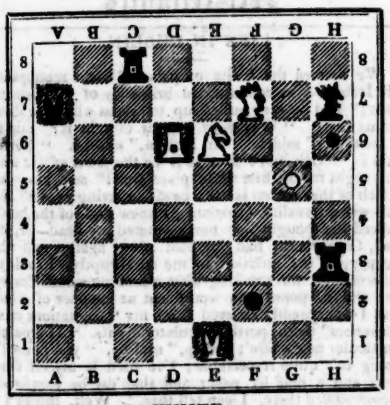
WHITE.	BLACK.
1 Knight.....D—2*	1 King .....G—8
2 Knight.....E—4	2 King .....H—8
3 Knight.....F—6	3 Pawn .....F—6
4 King ..... F—7	4 Pawn .....F—5
5 Pawn ..... G—7	5 King .....H—7
7 Pawn ..... G—8 becomes a Queen, and gives checkmate.	

* There are three ways of bringing the knight to F 6 at the third move, and it is unimportant which is selected.

[NO. CV.]

The white to move, and to give checkmate in six moves.

Black.



WHITE.

The Essayist.

SUPERSTITION AND CREDULITY.

It was Mr. Pitt, we believe, who used to say that there was a certain quantum of speculative and gambling propensity amongst the people, and that it was politic to convert this *penchant* to the advantage of the revenue of the country, by the encouragement of state lotteries. Now, it is most certain that there prevails amongst the people, not only in this, but in every other country, a vast predilection for the marvellous, whether as respects ghosts, witches, fairies, fortune-telling by the grounds of the tea-cup, death-watches, the miracles of the Abbé Paris, the divining rod, Perkins's metallic fractors, Mesmer's animal magnetism, or the *et ceteras* which would fill our paper. Many of these superstitions have died a natural death, superseded by others, which, in their turn, have held temporary dominion over the human mind. Witches are now allowed by law to perform their midnight orgies, and to fly by night or by day, unmolested, on their broomsticks, provided always (as the law says) the aforesaid broomsticks be honestly come by. Seeing that superstition, in one shape or other, is of such universal prevalence, would it not be politic, improving upon Mr. Pitt's idea about gambling, to convert this universal propensity to the public good. How it is to be managed, we do not pretend to explain, we only throw out the hint, in order that our legislators may profit by it at this particular crisis? We may be told that there is nothing new in the suggestion, as it has been the invariable custom of all ages to turn human credulity to good account; nor are we ignorant that such has long been the practice, either for private or public emolument. The trade in virgin's bones was, at one time, carried on to such an extent, that the wonder of even the gaping and duped multitude was, where so many virgins came from. Volney, in his Travels in Egypt, Syria, &c. vol. 2, page 303, informs us, that, "Besides all this, the Metsallum collects duties on the exportation of certain singular commodities from Jerusalem. I mean (adds he) beads, relics, sanctuaries, crosses, passions, Agnes Dei, scapularies, &c., of which near three hundred chests are sent off annually."

If Government should adopt our suggestion, and endeavour to render the superstition of the people subservient to the exigencies of the state, we may be asked, what field is there now left? We may be told that a license to practice witchcraft, now-a-days, would not be very productive, as it is out of fashion, and only lives in the imperishable pages of Shakspeare.

It is not, however, our affair to enter into details. It is the province of a projecior to suggest, and leave the details to matter-of-fact people. We therefore repeat, that there is as much of the staple commodity of credulity to work upon now as ever; and if our ministers have not the wit to turn it to account, then are they no conjurors. We have pointed out to them where the game lies, and if they will not take the trouble to beat about for it, it is no fault of ours. "England expects every man to do his duty." We have done ours; and now that the state lottery is on its last legs, we once more advise our legislators to devise some other mode of making human folly and credulity subservient to the revenue of the country.

When animal magnetism was all the fashion, in France especially, as stated by the correspondent to whose letter these desultory remarks are intended as a preface, an able financier might have turned the mania to good account, by sharing the profits with licensed professors, instead of suffering the latter to enrich themselves exclusively by their craft. In like manner, when, a few years since, Perkins, in this country, made a fortune by selling, at five guineas, bits of steel and brass, under the name of metallic tractors, the Treasury might have put in its claim to half the profits, which would have been no trifle.

In the opinion of many persons, the system of phrenology, or bumpology, is the great humbug of the present day; and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer should happen to be a reader of the *Kaleidoscope*, (and what man of taste is not?) we trust this hint will not be lost upon him, when he next opens his budget.

Animal magnetism, which is the subject of our correspondent's letter, is, we fancy, somewhat on the wane, although it has had its staunch advocates of late; as we have shown in our fifth volume, in an editorial article upon hydrophobia, from which we shall transcribe the following extract:—

"Upwards of twenty years ago, when Dr. Willink was in Liverpool, we passed an evening with him at our own house. He had recently arrived from Germany, deeply learned in the metaphysics of Kant and the subtilties of Mesmer: after he had set half the company asleep with a long-winded dissertation on the merits of the former, in order to avoid nodding ourselves, which would have been unpardonable at our own table, we proposed to change the subject to animal magnetism, as the lesser bore of the two. The Doctor kindly complied, and read us a long lecture on the *rationale* of this occult science. As far as we can now recollect of the matter, he stated that the nervous system of one person might be brought to act upon that of another, producing motion or rest, provided the magnetiser was more powerful than the person magnetised: the former being *plus* and the latter *minus*. We asked for an experimental proof on the spot; and, after some shyness, which we thought we perceived on the part of the learned professor, he consented to oblige us. He desired all the persons in the room to place their hands and arms on the table, resting on the elbow and the points of the fingers, the palm of the hand being very near the table. He then proceeded to magnetise, or rather to claw us, with the fingers of both his hands, not omitting to apprize us of the symptoms which would immediately precede the crisis. This symptom was described to be a subtile stream of air, which would be perceptible on the palm of the hand, when the hand and arm would involuntarily rise from the table, whilst the elbow would still remain in its place. The experiment was tried in succession upon several gentlemen without success; and the explanation of the professor was, that such persons belonged to the *plus class*, with relation to himself, the agent; and that he could not, therefore, affect them. We then selected a very delicate young lady, who, by common consent, was pronounced to be *minus* with reference to the Doctor. Still the experiment failed; as the young lady declared she felt none of the expected symptoms. At last, a very stout German gentleman, remarkable for his predilection for the marvellous, expressed a wish to have the experiment tried upon him by his learned countryman. This last essay was more successful than the former efforts, as the Doctor had not clawed him many seconds, when the patient declared he felt the stream of air against his hand, and that his fingers appeared to be raised from the table by some invisible agent."

Acerbi, the traveller, was considered a shrewd and learned man; but it seems he permitted himself to be persuaded into a belief in the mysterious operations of animal magnetism, as we find by the following passages in his *Travels in Sweden, Finland, &c., vol. 1, p. 270.*

"I saw my fellow traveller (as incredulous as myself) fall into a profound sleep, by the mere motion of the magnetiser's fingers; I heard him speak in his sleep, and reply to whatever questions I proposed to him; I saw him again awake by the simple motion of magnetiser's fingers, whilst I was unable to rouse him from his somnolency, though I brought fire close to his hand, an experiment to which he was as insensible as a dead body. He awoke, after sleeping from five to six hours, remembering nothing of what he had said, denying obstinately that he had been asleep, and yielding with difficulty, at last, to the authority of his watch, and the testimony of all those who had witnessed the circumstance."

We shall now proceed to lay before our readers the letter of our correspondent, in which these prefatory remarks originated.

ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

"Here again mad fancy seems to lead
The airy notions of an empty head."

Animal magnetism is said to be "a sympathy existing between the magnet and the human body, by means of which, the former, it is said, possesses the power of curing many diseases." This was the original import of this science when it was produced to the world from the philosophic head of Father Heyl, of Germany, in 1774; but M. Mesmer, a physician of the same country, so far re-

fined on Heyl's theory as to assert that he could perform miraculous cures, and transpose sensations, or transport the soul of one person from one part of space to another person in a different part. He also declared there was but one disease in the world, and but one cure, namely, animal magnetism!

Dr. Mesmer may be regarded as the founder of one of the wildest theories that ever was spun from the speculative brain of an enthusiastic impostor; one of the most complete attempts that ever had origin in the scientific world to impose on credulity and mislead the vulgar. He had already written "A Dissertation on the Influence of the Stars on the Human Body," in which, by a system of "astrologico-physico" reasoning, he accounted for the influence of these unknown and undefined bodies on the animal frame, and defended his thesis before the University of Vienna. But when he attempted a defence of his new theory before the Academy of Science at Berlin, he was rejected as an arrant impostor, as the academicians unanimously threatened a full exposure of his absurdities, if he did not desist from promulgating such superstitious and incongruous theories. As a prophet (and especially a false one) has no honour in his own country, Mesmer travelled over a great part of Europe, and at last settled at Paris, where, by the assiduous promulgation of his theory, he procured a number of patients, whom he cured, as he asserted, by the aid of animal magnetism alone. By one of those unaccountably strange vicissitudes, which occur even in civilised countries, he gradually acquired a number of patients, not only capable of employing his own time, but also that of several assistants, whom he initiated into the mysteries of animal magnetism: among these pupils were one or two wild speculative physicians, although one of them (Deslon) is said to have amassed £100,000, in a few years, by this healing fraud.

At length, however, the faculty grew jealous, but Mesmer was, notwithstanding the opposition to his schemes, petitioning Parliament for a remuneration for his discovery; but he soon discovered he was born a few centuries too late to carry on the imposture much longer, as the Court of France at length thought the subject important enough to institute an inquiry into its truth; accordingly a commission was appointed to examine and report on the theory, which had caused such a great sensation over all Europe. The half of the commissioners were scientific and philosophical members of the Royal Academy of Paris, and the other half consisted of the most eminent of the faculty; these, with the venerable Dr. Franklin at their head, began the investigation. Franklin was then (1779) in France, as a plenipotentiary from the United States. The commissioners, after various tedious and laborious experiments, both in the public hospitals of Paris, and in their own houses, particularly Franklin, who caused four of Deslon's patients to be removed to his (Franklin's) house, for the better informing himself of the truth of the new theory, but all in vain; the bubble which had floated in the air since the inventive brain of Heyl first pretended to have discovered an extraordinary science, in 1774, was now burst; five years' existence did not give sufficient security to imposition to continue its depredations on the weak and credulous part of mankind, and rob their pockets, by the impudence of pretended skill, while it made their bodies tremble by its alleged power! Neither Mesmer nor Deslon could demonstrate any thing tending to impress the conviction of the existence of animal magnetism, in consequence of which the court promised Mesmer a handsome reward, if he really knew, and would communicate, any of the secrets he pretended to possess relative to this strange system of universal cure, but all in vain; Mesmer was deaf to invitation, and blasted at once in his prospects of fame and wealth by deluding mankind in such a blindfolded manner! A few years afterwards, however, the theory was again revived, and so far improved in the wildness of its hypothesis, that the sympathies of the mind, nay, the soul itself, could be r posed, or rendered communicable from one person to another; thus:—A person in Liverpool was supposed to have the power of transporting his soul to a person in London, and *vice versa*. This system, if true, would go far to injure the revenue arising from the post-office. It was imagined that one could make another, at any distance, feel or think of the person making the experiment: nay, to have a sort of presentiment of any thing disastrous or ominous respecting one's friend. As Plato (ridiculously enough called the *Divine Plato*) refined the heathen mythology, so these last philosophers subtilised this species of magnetism from physical to supernatural remedies. *Animal tractors* were, I believe, branches of the same tree. It is an extraordinary but true fact, that men of otherwise enlightened understandings and strong minds, should have been the dupes of such gross imposition as this; yet, when we recur to many of those illustrious characters who adorn the annals of almost all nations and ages, we shall find some of them, indeed, like our great Bacon,

"The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind,"

subject to a belief in the most absurd superstition. Friar Bacon, himself no mean philosopher, believed, or rather inculcated the belief, that he could grant recipes for the prolongation of life. Cicero, the greatest and most refined scholar of his time, believed in the ominousness or auspiciousness of chickens picking grains of corn. Kepler, the acute astronomer and excellent geometrician, was ridiculous enough to believe the planets to be *huge animals*, which swam round the sun by means of certain fins acting upon the ethereal fluid, similar to that of fishes on water; he likewise imagined the comets to be monstrous animals, generated in the celestial space by means of a peculiar animal faculty; and John Boden, a learned Frenchman of the sixteenth century, entertained, if possible, a more ridiculous opinion: he maintained that the comets "are spirits, which having lived on the earth innumerable ages, and being at last arrived on the confines of death, celebrated their last triumph, or are called to the firmament like shining stars. This is followed by famine, plague, &c. because the people destroy the governors and chiefs who appease the wrath of God." And "our sixth Harry," famous for his credulity and imbecility, was in the first rank of believers in all things derogatory to true knowledge and the real dignity of the human mind. "The science of alchymy," says Mr. Baines, in his history of Lancashire, "and transmutation of metals,—that *ignis fatuus* which always exhibits a dawn, but never produces the fruition of day, had the honour to rank amongst its votaries Henry VI., the unfortunate representative of the house of Lancaster. Though he had on a former occasion commissioned three philosophers to make the precious metals, without receiving from them any return in gold and silver, his credulity, like that of many wiser men, was unshaken by disappointment; and he issued a pompous grant in favour of three other alchymists, who boasted that they could not only transmute the inferior metals into gold and silver, *but could also impart to man perpetual youth*, with unimpaired powers of mind and body, by means of a specific called—*the Mother and Queen of Medicines—the Inestimable Glory—the Quintescence—or the Elixir of Life!** In favour of these three 'lovers of truth and haters of deception,' as they modestly style themselves, Henry dispensed with the law passed by his royal grandfather (5th Henry IV. cap. 4) against the undue multiplication of gold and silver, and empowered them to transmute other metals into those more precious ones. This extraordinary commission had the sanction of Parliament; and two out of the three commissions, there is little reason to doubt, were the heads of leading families in Lancashire—Sir Thomas Ashton, o Ashton-under-Line, and Sir Edward Trafford, of Traf ford.† These sages, imposing probably upon themselv as well as upon others, kept the King's expectations u to the highest pitch; and in the following year he actuall informed his people that the happy hour was approachin when, by the means of the *stone*, he should be able to pa all his debts!"

These things may well stagger the mind of a ration being of the nineteenth century; but the fact is, that w are not in some cases wiser, and certainly not much bett than our forefathers, for in society at this day are man persons who believe in the influence of animal magnetism witchcraft, and astrology, as firmly and as conscientiousl as they do their Bibles!‡ Nearly allied to this story o "our sixth Harry," is one related in Kelly's Reminis cences, of a performer who spent a great part of his time in searching for the old delusive phantom, the philoso pher's stone. Livy, with all the credulity of the vulgar transmits to posterity the pretended fact, that milk an honey were rained from heaven; that an ox spoke, an a female changed her sex; and the pious, credulous, weak, and superstitious Bishop Pontoppidan (with rev rence be it said of his Grace of Norway) believed in th existence of a huge animal, called a *Kraken*, three mile long! In short, such is the silliness, the rank superst tion of the human mind sometimes, that where it doe not excite our contempt, it should always merit our pity.

AMICUS JUSTITIÆ.

* The experiment to make man, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, "live for ever," has been made in France by draining the blood from the human body, and injecting into the veins "lamb's blood." The patients upon whom the trial was made slept immediately with their fathers. After such things, who would deny that the Oracle of Delphos did not prophesy, or that the statue of Fortune spoke in Rome!

† The two worthy knights obtained a patent in the 28th o Henry VI. for making alchymy, and changing several metals

‡ Some *scientific* friends of the writer are believers in thes things; but the fact itself proclaims how little they know o the real science of the mind—a clear and rational view of th Deity and his handmaid, nature; when "they permit thei minds to be thus clouded," as my Lord Bacon expresses it, w the tales of a fire side, or the philosophy of the nursery o such "old wife's fables," as the Apostle James calls them.

Miscellanies

LIFE IN DUBLIN.

We entered the "city of palaces,"—the metropolis o all Ireland—the concentrated brilliancy of "the emera gem;" and Corney pulled up to ask us where he shoul set us down. "Was your honour ever in it?" said h "In what?" said I. "In Dublin," said he. "Never, said I. "Och 'fait! then ye'll see the *jewel of the wor* this night for the first time, plase God!" said he—"an which of the *hot-hels* is it I'll be afther laving ye at?" No this was a puzzling question. I knew none of the hotels indeed the thought had never entered my head—or, if I had, Corney's car had jumbled it out again; and whe he popped the question to me so abruptly, I could no answer him, for thinking what a dashing splash Corney car and its population would cut at the door of a hot But I was speedily relieved from my "cogitations on u pearances" by the portly speculator in oats. "If thou'rt particular as t'where't put up," said he, "yon house I'm going to's quite respectable; I've used it myself fift year and a half by past; and thah'dst be *cumfortable 'commydated* there, I can tell thee." Well, thinks I t myself, 'tis of little consequence where, for the few hour I've to stop; and any where rather than to a "hotel" o such an equipage as Corney Flannegin's. So having thanked the portly one for his politeness, Corney put his mare into a *throt* again, and in five minutes thereaft he pulled her up at the door of "yon house," which, after all, turned out to be a *rale hotel*—a great double-fronte concern, covered with sign-boards, informing the publi in long-legged letters of gold, that the worthy proprieto thereof not only did for the living lieges, but for the th ones also,—"——'s Grand Hotel for Gentlemen and Fa milies—Funerals completely furnished." Very accom modative that! as much as to say—"Walk in, Ladie and Gentlemen—eat, drink, and be merry, as fast as yo can, for you may die to-morrow, you know! and if you do die, never throuble yourself about it at all—sure I'v every thing ready for furnishing your funeral complately! However, I could not set it down as an *Irish peculiarity* because I recollected that in the front of a window of a pretty little inn between Rochester and Canterbury—a inn embosomed in flowers and shrubs and gadding ha

bines, and abounding in blooming hand-maidens, handing about glasses of fine, fresh, sparkling Kentish ale to thirsty travellers—in the front window of that very inn there is, or very lately was, the following *memenli mori*-ish announcement:—"A handsome velvet *pall* to let for hire; Ditto, a *second best!*" which is certainly very accommodative as far as it goes; but mine host of the Grand Hotel in dear Dublin, who keeps "an excellent larder, neat wines, good beds, and furnishes funerals *completely*," may be said to offer the *ne plus ultra* of earthly and *earthy* accommodation. I wonder whether he keeps a *Doctor* on his establishment?

Whilst I was pondering upon these things, my portly oaten speculatist was busied in unloading himself from the car; and Corney having done the ditto for the *portmantles and humberhellahs*—we essayed to enter the grand hotel; but we had hardly crossed the threshold, when we were stopped by an inner glass door, locked and bolted. The speculator in oats took hold of the handle of the door and shook it lustily. Nobody came to open it.

Corney played a *phillaloo*, "rat a tat tat, tantararah, rat tat!" upon the little brass knocker, but still nobody came. "Sblood an' ouns!" cried Corney, "sure they wont *all* be at mass?"—"Hah, hah, they'll be here by and bye, no doubt," said the quiet speculator in oats; and so it turned out, for in less than *ten minutes* the door was opened by a melancholy sort of waiter, who admitted us in silence, and then fastened the door again. "Is it your custom to lock out custom here?" said I.—"I don't know for that, Sir," replied he; "but I opened it as soon as ever the masther tould me."

In the hall were two men, standing one on each side one of the parlour doors, and looking as like a couple of bumbailiffs in waiting as possible; but the speculator in oats assured me they were neither more nor less than the attendants of a certain noble Lord, who had taken up his residence in that parlour many months before, and they were constantly waiting at the door to receive his orders through the key-hole. And sure enough it was as he had said; for directly after, I heard some one talking inside the room, like a bee in a churn, as it were, whilst the two queer-looking men outside were alternately clapping their ears to the key-hole, and answering him with a "Yes, my Lord." "Very well, my Lord." "I shall, my Lord." "The *thrubble* wont be much, my Lord." "Indeed he did, my Lord," &c. I was afterwards told, that this self, incarcerated Lord is the son of a certain learned law Lord—who still deals out puns and punishment in spite of Mr. O'Connell's recent attempt to put a parliamentary extinguisher upon him. Be all this as it may, however, I left his Latent Lordship to his key-hole communications, and went up stairs to dress—was very much impeded in that operation by divers very unpolite fleas, who had got possession of the chamber. Knocked them about pretty handsomely in return for their rudeness—got away from them as soon as I could, and was forthwith introduced to a cut of ash-coloured salmon, swimming in salt butther; a dish of two inch, very taxy-waxy-ish, real Irish beefteaks; two rich cut glasses of mouldy pickles; a gooseberry tart, only three days old; some brown-edged mustard in half-pint tumbler; and seven blue bottle flies smothered in a vinegar cruet.

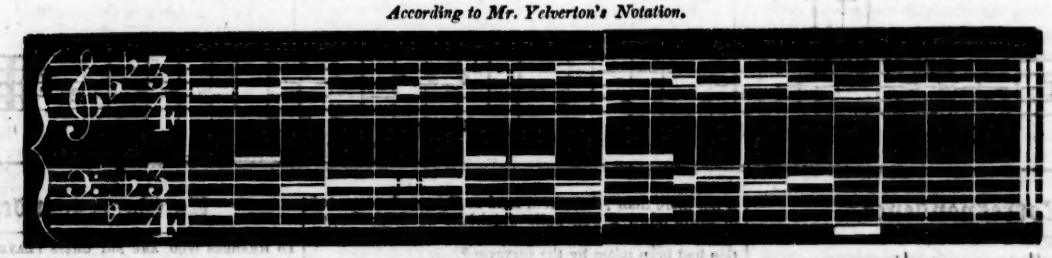
The Fine Arts.

NEW MODES OF MUSICAL NOTATION.

(Continued from our two last publications.)

A SPECIMEN OF THE FIRST PART OF "GOD SAVE THE KING,"

According to Mr. Yelverton's Notation.



NEW SYSTEM OF MUSICAL NOTATION.

(Continued from our last.)

Having examined into the merits and claims to originality of several alleged improvements upon the universally recognised mode of writing and printing music, we shall now offer a few remarks upon a plan suggested by Mr. Yelverton, of Liverpool. Whatever pretensions it may have to be regarded as an improvement upon that in general use, it appears to us to possess at least the rare merit of entire originality; as we have never met with any thing analagous to it in any of the numerous works we have read or consulted upon the subject.

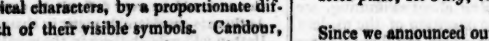
There is something ingenious, simple, and picturesque, in the thought of representing the proportionate lengths of the different musical characters, by a proportionate difference in the length of their visible symbols. Candour, however, obliges us to observe to the gentleman who suggested this original and ingenious device, that it is, in our opinion, much less adapted for ordinary music and general application, than for psalmody, or that species of composition which abounds in semibreves or minims, with little admixture of crotchets, quavers, &c.

If confined to sacred music, or other compositions of a similar character, we should, ourselves, decidedly prefer Mr. Yelverton's system to that now in use. It is, if we may so express ourselves, more graphic and philosophical. After a little practice, the association between the length of the symbol to the eye, and the note itself to the ear, would greatly facilitate the habit of keeping correct time, provided the length of the standard semibreve were precisely defined, and universally adopted.

Mr. Yelverton's plan is so extremely simple, that it requires very little explanation; and what we have already remarked, together with the engraved specimen and the following communication of a correspondent, will render the method perfectly intelligible:—

SIR,—The above is a specimen of a new system of Musical Notation, which is upon the simple principle of making the spaces between the bars exactly equal in breadth, and of writing each note upon its respective line or space of a length proportionate to its duration of sound.

The spaces between the bars may be subdivided by finer lines than those that mark the bars, for the greater facility of writing and reading. In common time the subdivisions may be two, four, eight, &c.—and in triple time, three, six, nine, &c. in each bar. Accidental sharps, flats, and naturals, may be expressed thus:



a sharp; a flat; a natural.

No marks for rests are necessary, they being understood in such parts of the bars as are left wholly unoccupied by notes.—Yours, &c.

Rose-place, 1st July, 1826.

Since we announced our intention to bring this subject before the public, we have been favoured with the following further communication from our correspondent.

"I observe in your notices to correspondents, in this day's *Mercury*, that you purpose next week to devote a portion of your columns to the consideration of the present, and the two newly-proposed modes of writing music, and that you intend making some observations on the relative merits of each. Not having in my note, which accompanied the specimen I sent you of my mode of writing, offered any remarks upon the advantages that it appears to me to present, and though I am conscious that it is now in such good hands that any thing which I can advance is rendered almost, if not wholly, unnecessary, yet I beg leave to point out what I consider a very material circumstance in favour of this mode of notation, that it interferes so little with that at present established, and which I consider perfect in its kind. The mind naturally clings to early prepossessions, and whatever aims at the complete subversion of established systems, even though it should possess more than ordinary claims to adoption, is likely to meet with a cold reception from the public. My system requires nothing additional to be learned. The present names of the notes may be retained; such of the modes, terms, and graces as are necessary may all be expressed in the usual manner. It only aims at relieving the present system of some incumbrances, so that a person may remain ignorant of some things, without prejudice, which it is now absolutely necessary that he should know. A learner is told that a crotchet is twice the length of a quaver; but this knowledge is not retained without some mental exertion, there being nothing in the form of the notes that indicates to the senses that the one is shorter than the other; nay, rather on the contrary; and if he were to reason from analogy, his deductions most likely would be contrary to the fact: for, as a dot placed after the crotchet requires that it should be lengthened one-half, a tail being added to it, which is the greater appendage of the two, would incline him to think it should be lengthened still more. By my system the memory is disburdened: the situation of every note on the staff, as in the present system (which in this particular admits of no improvement) points out its relative acuteness or gravity, and shows when to ascend or fall, and its length on the staff shows its relative duration; so that all that is required is in both instances expressed in the most palpable manner. As to times, he need only be instructed to hold each particular note as many moments as a point or index will be in passing over it, as it moves equally along the staff. In syncopated movements composed in parts, it appears to have a decided advantage over the present, as the situation of the notes shows how they succeed each other, as is here shown:

"To proficients these are circumstances of no moment; but whatever may facilitate the acquision of any art or science must be considered an advantage to society.

"Yours, &c.

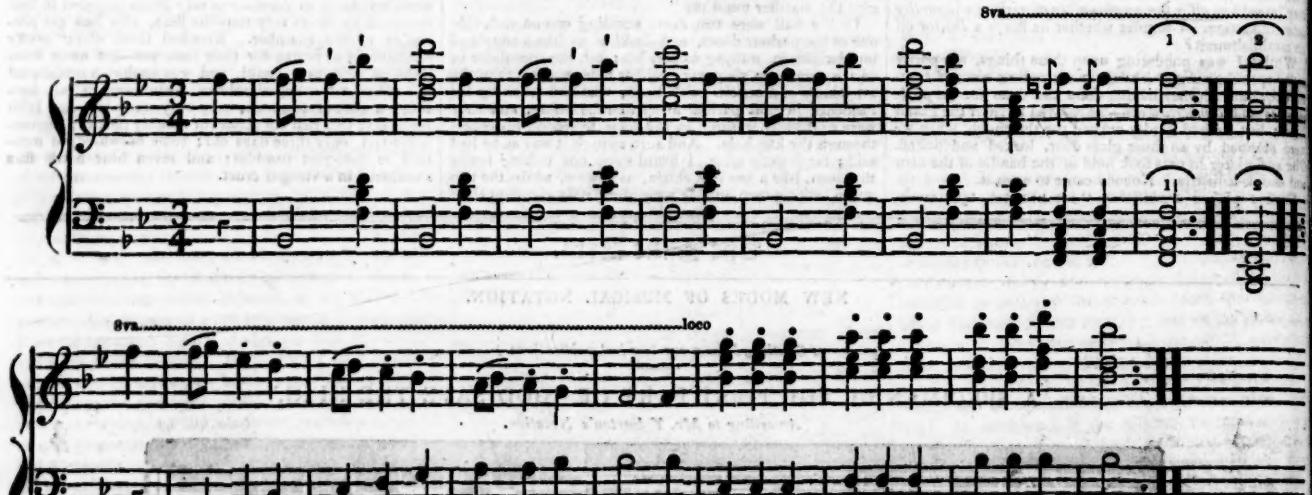
"Friday, July 21.

P. S. We may probably have a few further remarks to make on this subject in our next.

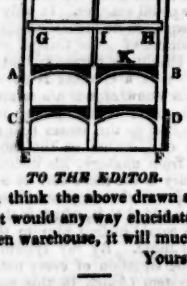
AN ORIGINAL WALTZ,

FOR THE PIANO-FORTE.

BY J. COHAN, PROFESSOR OF MUSIC, LIVERPOOL.



Correspondence.



TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—If you think the above drawn section worthy of insertion, or if it would any way elucidate the lamentable affair of the fallen warehouse, it will much oblige

Yours, H. W.

A and B shows the springs of upper arches and level of ground previous to the foundation being sunk below B. D foundation when sunk of intended warehouse. E and F foundation of warehouse previous to falling; the walls from A to E and B to F appear to have been 2½ bricks thick. G and H ends of beam in outer walls, over which were five other floors with beams all running into same walls. I, props on central butment, supporting the beam G H and upper beams. K brick floor under which was mud. From H to D was the only distance untied, as the wall F was backed to D by sand, on which was intended to be built a warehouse. On the side at A the street was higher than the spring of the arch. As beam G and H must become a tie by the weight on it, so must all the wall by other beams be tied in floors above, so that the wall F could only go at B, and that through weight pressing at H, which seems almost impossible, as that arch could only be weighted to beam G and H, being relieved by beam G and H in walls, and by prop at I resting on the central butment, and taking off all weight but one room at K.

To examine the matter closely, from D to H cannot be more than 14 feet, and could the goods in one room at K, the arch of which is not more than 13 feet, and spring at B not more than 7 feet from sand at D, ever be expected to throw down a well-built warehouse 2½ bricks length walls, well timbered, and well propped, if necessary caution had been taken by the surveyor?

It is reported by many, that a certain gentleman inspected the premises for the satisfaction of a person previous to lending money on them, and pronounced them good. If it be so, I am sorry to say he was so premature in judgment, losing the mortgagee what he had advanced on the warehouse, the owner the insurance, the merchant his property, and the mother her children.

Swimming Match.—A match for five sovereigns and a rump and dozen took place a few days ago, from a boat moored off Wandsworth through Westminster Bridge. The candidates were, Mr. Cranston, of Bath Terracte Millbank; and Mr. Stapleton, of Wimbledon. At starting, Mr. Cranston took the lead, and kept it at considerable speed, when M. Stapleton passed and won the match, leaving his opponent opposite Arundel Stairs. The distance is computed at more than four miles, and it was performed within two hours.—*London paper.*—Our readers may recollect, that in our strictures upon a silly article in the last *Quarterly Review* about swimming, we pointed out the absurdity of the assertion of the modern Munchausen, Mr. Bernardi, that a man could swim three miles an hour, or thirty miles a day. The fact is, that not one swimmer in a thousand can swim half of three miles in an hour, without having the stream in his favour. In the match recorded above we have no doubt that the current was in favour of the swimmers, although that fact is not stated, as it ought to have been. Our reasons for assuming it are these:—Had the stream been against them, that circumstance would unquestionably have been mentioned, to enhance the merit of the exploit, and if the stream was not opposed to them, it must have been in their favour, because they were two hours in the water, which could not have been stationary even a quarter of an hour. Taking it for granted, then, that they had the advantage of the stream, and were good swimmers, how does their speed accord with that which M. Bernardi assumes? They advanced four miles in two hours, and if we make a very trifling allowance for the advantage of the current, it will reduce the speed below a mile and a half in the hour;—and, whatever the editor of the *Quarterly Review* may think of the matter, it is capital swimming.—*Ed. Kal.*

To Correspondents.

TO READERS WHO ARE NOT CHESS PLAYERS.—As it is probable that the great majority of our readers who feel no interest whatever in chess, may think we dedicate rather too much space to that department, we take this occasion to apprize them that, eventually, they shall be no losers by such circumstance, as we shall, by means of occasional gratuitous suppliments, more than make compensation for the space occupied by chess, and other subjects of partial, rather than of general interest.

THE KNIGHT'S MOVE AT CHESS.—As our chess department is rather longer than usual this week, we shall suspend the continuation of our investigation of the anomalous problem of the Knight's move until next week. A correspondent of no ordinary perseverance and acuteness is busy simplifying the process: and we do not despair of ultimately being enabled to lay down a simple and intelligent general solution of the problem.

MUSIC.—The minuet and trio, by Mr. Hatton, are somewhat too long for our columns. From the nature of the composition it would be very difficult to arrange it in the types. As there is considerable merit in these pieces, we hope Mr. Hatton will publish them in the usual form, as they will do him credit.

THE BETROTHED.—The first portion of this story is so short that we shall postpone its appearance until we are favoured with a continuation.

PHILIDONIAN MATCH AT CHESS.—Next week we shall give the moves of the game which Mr. Keen, of Middle Temple, lately won, without seeing the chess-board. We shall also translate (if we may so term it) the moves into our own chess phraseology or notation.

Tyro is referred to our chess department for a reply to his note.

We have further to acknowledge *N. W.—S. G. F.—L.—J. B.—J. C.—W. C.—R. T.—Anon—Amicus—A Manchester Reader—Dr. T. T.—Mucmosynt.*

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